

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1647

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 6092

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GT

SUBJECT: ELECTORAL REGISTRY REJECTS APPLICATIONS OF THREE WOULD-BE POLITICAL PARTIES

1. ON DEC 27 ELECTORAL REGISTRY ANNOUNCED DECISION TO REJECT APPLICATIONS OF ORGANIZATION COMMITTEES FOR FURD, FDG, AND PARN, THUS DEFINITELY PREVENTING THESE POLITICAL GROUPS FROM PARTICIPATING AS POLITICAL PARTIES DURING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. WOULD-BE PARTIES CONCERNED HAVE CONDEMNED MOVE AS GOVERNMENT MANEUVER DESIGNED TO FRUSTRATE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND HAVE ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO FIGHT IT VIA LEGAL MEANS. SOME POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE IMPLIED THAT ACTION IS INTENDED TO PROVOKE VIOLENT REACTION AND THUS PAVE WAY FOR "AUTO-GOLPE" TO KEEP ARANA IN POWER.

2. COMMENT: WHILE ELECTORAL REGISTRY HAD SUFFICIENT TECHNICAL GROUNDS FOR ITS DECISION (WE HAVE SEEN EVIDENCE OF FALSE SIGNATURES, MULTIPLE USE OF SAME FINGERPRINTS WITH DIFFERENT NAMES, ETC.), WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE MOVE STEMMED FROM POLITICAL DECISION BY GOVERNMENT STRATEGISTS, SINCE IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER ANY OF THE PARTIES PRESENTLY REGISTERED WOULD BEAR UP UNDER THE KIND OF SCRUTINY TO WHICH FURD, FDG AND PARN WERE SUBJECTED.

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3. GOG MOTIVATION REMAINS OBSCURE FOR THE MOMENT.

IT HAD NO OBLIGATION TO MAKE A DECISION ON APPLICATIONS WITHIN ANY GIVEN TIME FRAME, AND COULD EASILY HAVE LET THE APPLICATIONS REST IN LIMBO UNTIL AFTER MARCH 3RD ELECTIONS. FURD LEADER COLOM ARGUETA HAD ALREADY GIVEN UP HOPE FOR HIS PARTY'S PRE-ELECTORAL INSCRIPTION AND IS SUPPORTING RIOS MONTT'S CAMPAIGN WHILE BARGAINING FOR DEPUTY SLOTS ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY TICKET. FDG KINGPIN MARROQUIN ROJAS HAS SIMILARLY GIVEN UP AND IS SWINGING HIS SUPPORT, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, TO PR CANDIDATE PAIZ. MOVE MAY THEN HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO PUT TO FINAL REST COL. PERALTA'S HOPES OF PRESSURING THE GOVERNMENT INTO RECOGNIZING A PARTY WHICH WOULD NOMINATE HIM FOR PRESIDENT.

4. CANCELLING THE PARN ONLY GOES HALFWAY, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE APPLICATION OF THE FUN, WHICH ALSO SUPPORTS PERALTA, HAS BEEN LEFT PENDING. COMPLICATING FACTOR HERE WOULD BE THE FACT THAT THE ELECTORAL REGISTRY MUST RESOLVE THE APPLICATION OF EACH PARTY IN THE SAME TIME ORDER IN WHICH APPLICATIONS WERE SUBMITTED. THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN LINE FOR CONSIDERATION IS THE CAN, ORGANIZED BY THE PRESIDENT'S SON, ROBERTO "TITO" ARANA, WHILE THE FUN IS FIFTH. THUS, NO ACTION CAN BE TAKEN ON THE FUN UNTIL THE APPLICATION OF THE CAN IS DECIDED FINALLY. THE QUESTION OF WHETHER TO GIVE THE CAN POLITICAL STATUS HAS BEEN A BITTER BONE OF CONTENTION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT COALITION. IT COULD THEREFORE BE THAT THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT WANT TO DECIDE ON THE *CAN UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION, AND HAS THUS LEFT THE FUN PENDING.

5. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY, OF COURSE, IS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS DECIDED TO HAVE CAN AUTHORIZED NOW DESPITE THE PROBLEMS THIS WOULD CAUSE, AND THAT HE THEREFORE HAD TO GET THE FIRST THREE PARTIES OUT OF THE WAY BEFORE HE COULD DO SO. WE WILL BE SEEKING *LARIFIC*TION OF GOG MOTIVES NEXT WEEK. AT P**SENT WE DO NOT GIVE THE "AUTO-GOLPE" THEROY MENTIONED PARA 1 MUCH WEIGHT.
DREYFUSS

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